

HAPPENINGS AROUND GRACE THIS WEEK

October 1, 2023—October 8, 2023

18th SUNDAY OF PENTECOST

10/1/23

8:00AM Spoken Worship

8:45AM Adult Forum Group

Directory Pictures

10:15AM Traditional Worship

Directory Pictures

4:00PM Alcoholics Anonymous

MONDAY 10/2/23

7:00PM Alcoholics Anonymous

TUESDAY 10/3/23

10:30AM Worship and Music

Committee Meeting

6:30PM Narcotics Anonymous

7:00PM Alcoholics Anonymous

WEDNESDAY 10/4/23

11:30AM Bayside Duplicate Bridge

7:00PM Narcotics Anonymous

THURSDAY 10/5/23

5:00PM Choir Rehearsal

7:00PM Al-Anon

FRIDAY 10/6/23

10:30AM Grace Stitchers

7:30PM Alcoholics Anonymous

SATURDAY 10/7/23

No events

19th SUNDAY OF PENTECOST

10/8/23

8:00AM Spoken Worship Service

8:45 AM Adult Forum Group

10:15AM Traditional Worship

4:00PM Alcoholics Anonymous

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

MON-WED 10:00AM-3:00PM

FRI 10:00AM-1:00PM

PASTOR OFFICE HOURS

MON-WED 10:00AM-2:00PM

THURS varies

SHORE DINER

Present this bulletin on a Sunday
and Shore Diner will donate 20% to Grace
Lutheran Church. Present this on
any other day, and we will donate 10%.

Shore Diner
6710 Tilton Road
Egg Harbor Township, NJ 08234
609-641-3669

October 1, 2023

18th Sunday of Pentecost



GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH

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Rev. Althea Albright, Pastor ☩ Scott J. Breiner, Music Director

Corinne Rhodes, Administrative Assistant

Alison Toth, Social Media Consultant

We welcome you to worship here at Grace!

*Note that all text written in **bold** is for congregation participation.
Our hymn songs are found in the Evangelical Lutheran Worship
red hymnal found in the pews.*

GATHERING

Thank you for joining with us as we worship our Lord together!

Introduction

Jesus' parable about two sons who don't do what they say reveals surprises in the reign of God. In the reading from Ezekiel the people claim the ways of the Lord are unfair, while God offers repentance and new life. Paul urges us to look to Christ as a model of humility, putting the interests of others above our own. Nourished by the broken bread and shared cup, we offer our lives for the sake of our needy world.

WELCOME

Rev. Althea Albright

PRELUDE

O God, Thou Holy God by Sigfried Karg-Elert
Please stand as you are able.

GREETING

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

God of all mercy and consolation, come to the help of your people, turning us from our sin to live for you alone. Give us the power of your Holy Spirit that we may confess our sin, receive your forgiveness, and grow into the fullness of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Most merciful God, **we confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name.**
Amen.

In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us, and for his sake God forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained

SENDING

SENDING BLESSING

May Almighty God, ✠ Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit, watch over you, guide you, and give you faith for the journey now and forever. **Amen.**

SENDING HYMN *What God Ordains Is Good Indeed* ELW #776

*Please be seated. Enjoy the postlude music
and meditate on how God spoke to your heart today.*

POSTLUDE *Was Gott Tut, Das Ist Wohlgetan* by Johann Gottfried Walther

DISMISSAL Go in peace. Be the hands and feet of Christ in the world!
Thanks be to God.

*We are glad for your presence today.
We hope you come again soon!*

We thank all those serving in worship today! Reader: Edna Cordery

The flowers sponsors this week are: Joe and Kathy Ruffenach,
thanking God for His many blessings!



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for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

To you, O God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, be all honor and glory in your holy church, now and forever. **Amen.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Come to the banquet of Christ. All are welcome. **Amen.**

COMMUNION HYMN *Lamb of God* *WOV page 25*

DISTRIBUTION OF HOLY COMMUNION

EVERYONE IS INVITED to come forward at the direction of the ushers. If you are unable to come to the altar, you may remain seated and the pastor will bring you communion after everyone has come forward. Children may come forward to receive a blessing.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Blessed be your name, O God, **for we have feasted on your goodness. You are our hope and joy. Strengthen us by this food, and send us to share with the world your love and welcome others to your house, where none are left out and all are satisfied. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.**

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Please stand as you are able.

minister of the church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the ☩ Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

OPENING HYMN *At the Name of Jesus* ELW #416
VERSES 1, 3, 5 ALL, VERSE 2 WOMEN, VERSE 4 MEN

GREETING

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **And also with you.**

KYRIE *WOV page 12*

HYMN OF PRAISE *WOV page 14*

PRAYER OF THE DAY

God of love, giver of life, you know our frailties and failings. Give us your grace to overcome them, keep us from those things that harm us, and guide us in the way of salvation, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

Please be seated

WORD

FIRST READING: Ezekiel 18:1-4, 25-32

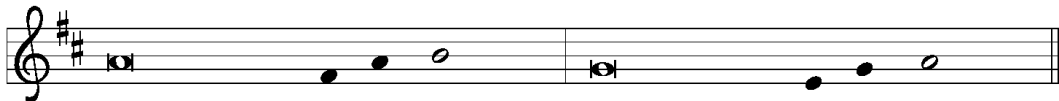
Ezekiel challenges those who think they cannot change because of what their parents were and did, or who think they cannot reverse their own previous behavior. God insistently invites people to turn and live.

¹The word of the LORD came to me: ²What do you mean by repeating this proverb concerning the land of Israel, "The parents have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge"? ³As I live, says the Lord GOD, this proverb shall no more be used by you in Israel. ⁴Know that all lives are mine; the life of the parent as well as the life of the child is mine: it is only the person who sins that shall die.

²⁵Yet you say, “The way of the Lord is unfair.” Hear now, O house of Israel: Is my way unfair? Is it not your ways that are unfair? ²⁶When the righteous turn away from their righteousness and commit iniquity, they shall die for it; for the iniquity that they have committed they shall die. ²⁷Again, when the wicked turn away from the wickedness they have committed and do what is lawful and right, they shall save their life. ²⁸Because they considered and turned away from all the transgressions that they had committed, they shall surely live; they shall not die. ²⁹Yet the house of Israel says, “The way of the Lord is unfair.” O house of Israel, are my ways unfair? Is it not your ways that are unfair?

³⁰Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, all of you according to your ways, says the Lord GOD. Repent and turn from all your transgressions; otherwise iniquity will be your ruin. ³¹Cast away from you all the transgressions that you have committed against me, and get yourselves a new heart and a new spirit! Why will you die, O house of Israel? ³²For I have no pleasure in the death of anyone, says the Lord GOD. Turn, then, and live. The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM 25:1-9



¹To | you, O LORD,
I lift | up my soul.
²**My God, I put my trust in you; let me not be | put to shame,**
nor let my enemies triumph | over me.
³Let none who look to you be | put to shame;
rather let those be put to shame | who are treacherous.
⁴**Show me your | ways, O LORD,**
and teach | me your paths.
⁵Lead me in your | truth and teach me,
for you are the God of my salvation; in you have I trusted all | the day
long.
⁶**Remember, O LORD, your compas- | sion and love,**
for they are from | everlasting.

our hearts...) Give them encouragement and consolation in your presence and love. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

A: Teach us your paths as we pray for this congregation. Be at work in us and unite us in your love as we labor together for the sake of the gospel. Bless all those who we welcome into your house especially our guests at Oktoberfest. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

A: We give thanks for all the saints who have been called to your eternal home. Keep us strong our faith and confident in your promises of grace and eternal life. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

P: Remember us according to your steadfast love as we offer these and the prayers of our hearts, trusting in your compassion made known through Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

HOLY COMMUNION

GREAT THANKSGIVING

WOV page 22

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ.

And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY

WOV page 22

You are indeed holy, almighty and merciful God. You are most holy, and great is the majesty of your glory.

You so loved the world that you gave your only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but have eternal life.

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and

PEACE The peace of the Lord be with you always. **And also with you.**

GREET YOUR NEIGHBOR

Take a brief moment to share the peace by greeting someone sitting near you. Verbal greetings are appropriate if you are not comfortable shaking hands or touching.

OFFERING

OFFERTORY *Let This Mind Be In You* by Craig Courtney

Please stand as you are able.

PRESENTATION OF GIFTS *Let the Vineyards* *WOV page 21*

OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray. **God of power, God of plenty, all things belong to you. We bring these gifts to the table, that all might be fed. Form us into the body of your beloved, Jesus Christ, our Savior. Amen.**

Please be seated

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

P: Remembering the caring and generous works of God, we pray for the church, creation, and the needs of our neighbors. *Brief silence.*

A: We put our trust in you as we pray for the church. Give bishops, pastors, deacons, and teachers the gifts of wisdom and discernment. Be with them in bold truth and faithful witness. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

A: Lead us in your truth as we pray for creation. Empower us to look to the interests of others as we make choices that impact the environment. Summon us to be advocates for healthy waterways, habitats, and air. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

A: Lead us in justice as we pray for those in government, the military, and other positions of authority. Strengthen them and give them humble hearts, looking to the needs of others. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

P: Trusting your goodness, we pray for all caregivers and people who are sick or suffering in any way (*especially all those we name aloud or in*

⁷Remember not the sins of my youth and ¹my transgressions; remember me according to your steadfast love and for the sake of your good-¹ness, O LORD.

⁸**You are gracious and up-¹right, O LORD; therefore you teach sinners¹ in your way.**

⁹You lead the low-¹ly in justice and teach the low-¹ly your way.

SECOND READING: Philippians 2:1-13

As part of a call for harmony rather than self-seeking, Paul uses a very early Christian hymn that extols the selflessness of Christ in his obedient death on the cross. Christ's selfless perspective is to be the essential perspective we share as the foundation for Christian accord.

¹If then there is any encouragement in Christ, any consolation from love, any sharing in the Spirit, any compassion and sympathy, ²make my joy complete: be of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. ³Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves. ⁴Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others. ⁵Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus,

⁶who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited,

⁷but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness.

And being found in human form,

⁸he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death—even death on a cross.

⁹Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name,

¹⁰so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth,

¹¹and every tongue should confess
that Jesus Christ is Lord,
¹²to the glory of God the Father.

¹²Therefore, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed me, not only in my presence, but much more now in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; ¹³for it is God who is at work in you, enabling you both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Please stand as you are able.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



The Holy Gospel according to Matthew the 21st chapter. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

GOSPEL: Matthew 21:23-32

After driving the moneychangers out of the temple (21:12), Jesus begins teaching there. His authority is questioned by the religious leaders, who are supposed to be in charge of the temple.

²³When [Jesus] entered the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to him as he was teaching, and said, “By what authority are you doing these things, and who gave you this authority?” ²⁴Jesus said to them, “I will also ask you one question; if you tell me the answer, then I will also tell you by what authority I do these things. ²⁵Did the baptism of John come from heaven, or was it of human origin?” And they argued with one another, “If we say, ‘From heaven,’ he will say to us, ‘Why then did you not believe him?’ ²⁶But if we say, ‘Of human origin,’ we are afraid of the

crowd; for all regard John as a prophet.”²⁷ So they answered Jesus, “We do not know.” And he said to them, “Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things.

28^c“What do you think? A man had two sons; he went to the first and said, ‘Son, go and work in the vineyard today.’ 29^cHe answered, ‘I will not’; but later he changed his mind and went. 30^cThe father went to the second and said the same; and he answered, ‘I go, sir’; but he did not go. 31^cWhich of the two did the will of his father?” They said, “The first.” Jesus said to them, “Truly I tell you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes are going into the kingdom of God ahead of you. 32^cFor John came to you in the way of righteousness and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes believed him; and even after you saw it, you did not change your minds and believe him.” The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

Please be seated.

Rev. Althea Albright

Please stand as you are able.

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY

O God, My Faithful God

ELW #806

THE APOSTLES' CREED

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.**

**On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic church, the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**